

Message Text

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45

ACTION ARA-20

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-07 H-03 INR-10 L-03

NSAE-00 NSC-07 PA-04 RSC-01 PRS-01 SPC-03 SS-20

USIA-15 AID-20 IO-14 DRC-01 /130 W

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R 011601Z APR 74

FM AMEMBASSY SANTO DOMINGO

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 0155

C O N F I D E N T I A L SANTO DOMINGO 1330

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR

SUBJECT: PRESIDENT BALAGUER ACCEPTS NOMINATION

REF : SD 1285

1. IN A BRIEF (20 MINUTES) NATION WIDE TELEVISION BROADCAST THE EVENING OF MARCH 29, PRESIDENT BALAGUER FORMALLY ACCEPTED THE REFORMIST PARTY (PR) AND THE NATIONAL YOUTH MOVEMENT (MNJ) NOMINATION AS PRESIDENTIAL CANDIDATE ON A JOINT PR/MNJ TICKET. THE PRESIDENT WAS NOMINATED BY BOTH PARTIES THE PREVIOUS DAY (REFTEL.

2. IN HIS ACCEPTANCE SPEECH, BALAGUER REFERRED TO THE PROMISE HE PUBLICLY MADE IN 1970 TO BE THE LAST DOMINICAN PRESIDENT TO SUCCEED HIMSELF IN OFFICE, DECLARING THAT HE "ACCEPTS THE RESPONSIBILITY OF HISTORY FOR HAVING FAILED TO FULFILL THAT PROMISE." BALAGUER ARGUED THAT HIS DECISION TO RUN AGAIN WAS PREDICATED NOT RPT NOT ON THE FACT THAT HIS TASK WAS NOT YET FINISHED ("PROGRESS - FOR A NATION - IS A CONTINUING PROCESS") NOR THAT HE, NOT BEING A PROVIDENTIAL MAN, WAS A "NATIONAL NECESSITY." RATHER, AVERRED THE PRESIDENT, HE DECIDED TO ACCEPT THE NOMINATION BECAUSE OF THE ABSENCE IN THE DOMINICAN REPUBLIC OF ORGANIZED POLITICAL PARTIES WHICH, IF ELECTED, COULD CONSTITUTE A VIABLE AND STABLE GOVERNMENT CAPABLE OF RESOLVING THE MANY PROBLEMS CREATED
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FOR THE DR BY THE CURRENT INTERNATIONAL SITUATION. BALAGUER

ADDED THAT THE VERY HETEROGENEITY OF THE POLITICAL MAKEUP OF THE OPPOSITION (I.E., "THE REVOLUTIONARY LEFT, THE CONSERVATIVE RIGHT, AND THE MOST RETROGRADE RIGHT") WOULD BRING CHAOS TO THE COUNTRY IF IT EVER SUCCEEDED IN COMING TO POWER IN ITS PRESENT FORM. HOW, THE PRESIDENT ASKED RHETORICALLY, COULD THE OPPOSITION MAINTAIN UNITY AND HARMONY IN THE GOVERNMENT IF IT WAS UNABLE TO DEMONSTRATE ANY UNITY AT THE NEGOTIATING TABLE IN ITS PRE-ELECTION MANEUVERINGS?

3. BALAGUER GAVE AS A SECOND REASON FOR ACCEPTING THE RENOMINATION THE OVERRIDING NECESSITY OF MAKING FUNDAMENTAL STRUCTURAL CHANGES IN DOMINICAN SOCIETY, CHANGES HE STRESSED COULD ONLY BE MADE WITHIN AN ORDERLY AND CONSTITUTIONAL FRAMEWORK. THE OPPOSITION, HE ARGUED, COMPOSED AS IT WERE OF BOTH THE FAR LEFT AND FAR RIGHT, WOULD BE TOTALLY UNABLE TO AGREE ON WHAT CHANGES WERE NECESSARY OR HOW THEY SHOULD BE EFFECTED.

4. BALAGUER CONCLUDED BY SAYING THAT THE GOVERNMENT WHICH RULED FOR THE NEXT FOUR YEARS WOULD BE ONE OF TRANSITION, ONE WHICH WOULD PREPARE THE GROUNDWORK FOR THE 1978 ELECTIONS IN ORDER TO CONVERT THE COUNTRY FROM A "CIRCUMSTANTIAL DEMOCRACY INTO A FUNCTIONAL AND TRULY OPERATIVE DEMOCRACY." BALAGUER THEN OFFERED TO ACCEPT INTO THIS TRANSITIONAL GOVERNMENT "ALL DEMOCRATIC GROUPS REGARDLESS OF IDEOLOGY."

5. COMMENT: BALAGUER'S SPEECH, ALTHOUGH SHOWING SOME IMPROVISATION, WAS TIGHTLY WRITTEN AND HIS ARGUMENTS WERE COGENT AND LUCIDLY PRESENTED. THOUGHTFUL DOMINICANS ARE NOT UNAWARE OF THE DISORGANIZED AND DEMORALIZED STATE OF THE OPPOSITION PARTIES NOR OF THE PERSONAL RIVALRIES, UNABASHED AMBITIONS, AND CRASS OPPORTUNISM WHICH HAVE CHARACTERIZED THE OPPOSITION'S VAIN EFFORTS TO PRODUCE A VIABLE POLITICAL OPTION TO BALAGUER. IT WOULD APPEAR, THEREFORE, THAT MANY MODERATE VOTERS SHOULD FIND HIS ARGUMENTS PERSUASIVE. BALAGUER'S OFFER TO INVITE THE OPPOSITION TO JOIN IN THE GOVERNMENT OF TRANSITION WAS SIMILAR TO HIS 1970 CALL FOR A NATIONAL

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UNITY GOVERNMENT.

6. BECAUSE BALAGUER'S ACCEPTANCE OF A RENOMINATION WAS WIDELY-ANTICIPATED, PUBLIC REACTION TO HIS SPEECH HAS BEEN EXPECTEDLY MUTED.

7. AIRGRAM CONTAINING COMPLETE TEXT OF SPEECH FOLLOWS.
HURWITCH

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NNN

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